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Institutional Spatial Interaction

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As man looks for better quality of life, issues relating to the outdoor spaces have always been included in his discussions. Landscape design has become synonym with the issue because it is fundamental in the field to maximise the potential of outdoor spaces. In recognising this, a group of our final year students proposed several landscape design works for institutional projects. We believe that landscape architects could be key players in ensuring the quality of outdoor environment.

Among the works are the Cultural and Performing Arts Centre, Community College and Elderly Home. All are challenging projects to experiment. The task is to undertake a comprehensive study, individually, in order to demonstrate the student's understanding about the design process. One of the key aspects that they should address is how to realise the full potential of institutional landscapes and create an attractive yet functional outdoor environment to compliment the existing or proposed buildings.

Muhamad Huzaimi Nor Rashid worked on the Cultural Art and Performing Centre in Kuala Lumpur. He presents an interesting approach by looking specifically at the current and emerging outdoor spaces. His cultural inspiration provides a positive and creative influence on contemporary design, and moreover, enhances local distinctiveness of the surrounding environment.

Rohaniah Mohd Nor worked towards enriching the landscape and integrating a community in symbiosis. She tried to provide a comprehensive model of community college in order to maximise its educational use. The landscape provides a variety of functional, attractive and integrated indoor and outdoor spaces for learning environment.

Azryt Aznan is committed to designing an elderly home. This project illustrates sensitivity to the community. He had identified a different concept and employed a technique in some common design while looking at present trends and directions. The quality of spaces in his project is a product of the physical element itself and the community interacting with it.

These three works show that landscape architecture is about the way people live. They provide all the ingredients, from the scene we look at, the space we experience, and to the art we aspire to.

Jury Review

Rafar Abdul Aziz, Siti Zakiah Mohamed, Hasanuddin Lamit & Khairina Zek Khairudin

There are three outstanding works that we have considered to be categorised under the 'Space Interaction' or Institutional Landscape. Special qualities of the selected works for this theme are reviewed below.

First, the Vortex Exodus of the Cultural and Performing Arts Centre in Kuala Lumpur has successfully showed the idea of extroverting from the originality and vibrant expression. This visionary master piece expresses significant relationships between the outdoor spaces and the building and the main desired line. The work was an experiment in landscape architectural presentation techniques. We found it refreshing to see some good examples of landscape architecture by a student taking it one step further in terms of dealing with architectural issues. However, the design has been strongly deliberated to the architectural components while lacking in addressing the importance of landscape elements.

Second, Enriching Communal Integration of Selandar Community College in Melaka has exhibited a credible attempt to creatively and intelligently translate idea and process into design. The work is informative and stimulating while the impressive presentation is achieved by the inclusion of sketches and perspectives. The strength of this work lies in the way in which it emphasises local characteristics and issues; communicating these in a clear and simple manner besides integrating functional outdoor spaces with administration and academic buildings that are planned symmetrically over the landscape. The symmetrical form and mood of spaces, however, contrast with the calming surrounding rural areas which are dominated by agricultural land.

Third, Eudemonia of an elderly home in Perak, has applied a comprehensive approach in landscape design. The innovative concept and presentation are combined to create an inspirational design. It is well supported by a thorough site analysis and synthesis. Although the integration and relationship between the site and surrounding limestone hill have not been well expressed, the design deals well with the sensitive community.

Finally, it is pleasing to see that all the works have shown great and intellectual design process. In general, the standard of works is competent and can be considered innovative or outstanding. The students or designers managed to integrate all attempts of other disciplines to strengthen the landscape design philosophy. These could be exciting projects if built.

Vortex

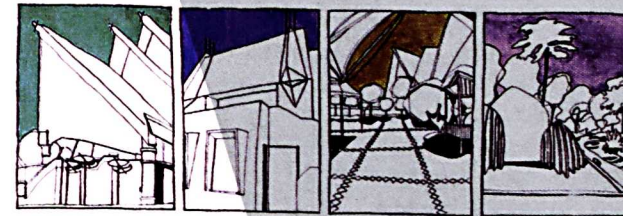
Noor Azizi Mohd Ali, Osman Mohd Tahir & Mustafa Kamal Mohd Shariff

This project by Muhamad Huzaimi is about reinterpreting the notion and perception of culture as the symbol of a national identity. The meaning of 'national identity' in relevance to a culture is given a new perspective and dimension not by altering or changing the roots but by re-understanding the roots itself. In doing so, it will alter the physical as well as the spiritual experiences in giving a new but genuine and authentic interpretation and reinterpretation of the character and images of culture and national identity.

The design objective aims to fill the niche, vacuum and gap of what is interpreted or misinterpreted as a national image. Instead of looking into what is Malaysian and not-Malaysian—in literal and physical manners—Muhamad Huzaimi gives us an alternative dimension in re-interpreting the meaning of national identity for both landscape and architecture. Culture, being a structural component of design, is given new but not pastiche nor ersatz meaning.

Though the physical form of the buildings seems to be prejudiced to the 'cultural form', the semiotic of it is taken to the fullest advantage in portraying a dynamic and energetic 'culture' as opposed to suppressed and static cultural symbol. It became a vehicle to express meaning beyond the form. The landscape is designed in such a way that it portrays not only the energetic form of the culture but most importantly, the meaning behind its very existence. The chosen plants are of native origin resembling the authenticity besides representing the 'cultural value'. Both landscape and architecture are given equal role and importance as both are vital components in the portraiture of identity. The national theatre or *Panggung Negara* is designed sympathetically to its immediate surroundings. The shape of the building represents the core of energy that is preserved in the 'vortex'. This energy is kept and preserved but also is a catalyst and impetus to the roots and culture. The national art gallery is created to resemble the movement of vortex in which arts and design are always moving and developing in parallel with the zeitgeist.

Vortex, the metaphor for this design project, is derived from the movement and formation of its turbulent flow. Vortex is a spinning and often turbulent flow of fluid. The speed and rate of rotation of the fluid are greatest at the centre but decrease progressively with distance from the centre. As with its architecture, the synaptic in definite form allows change, alteration and even restoration (a static value). It can also absorb additions, subtractions and modifications without disturbing its essential order and authentic value.



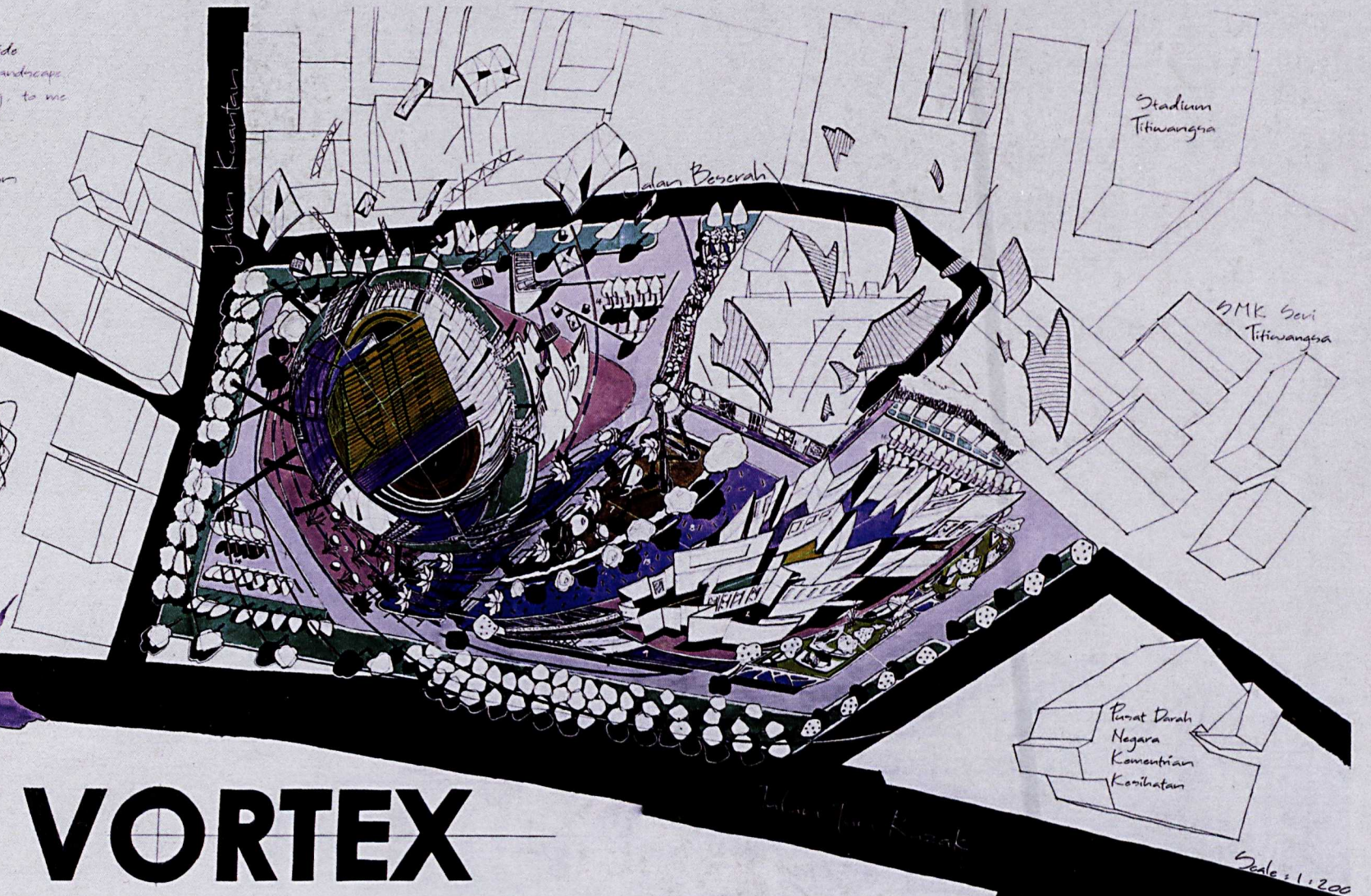
*Our own speech is determining, day by day, the
own style. Our eyes, unhappily, are unable yet to discern
it.*

Le Corbusier

*Blending
Axis
Dynamism
Audacity
Innovation*

*I don't divide
Architecture, Landscape
and Gardening, to me
they are one.*

Luis Barragan

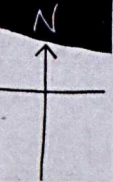


VORTEX

The Exodus of Cultural and
Arts Centre, Kuala Lumpur

Legend

- 1 National Theatre
- 2 National Art Gallery
- 3 The Stage
- 4 Terrace
- 5 Garden
- 6 National Water Feature
- 7 Artist's Meeting Room
- 8 Open Space
- 9 Children's Theatrical Space
- 10 Performance Hall
- 11 Entrance



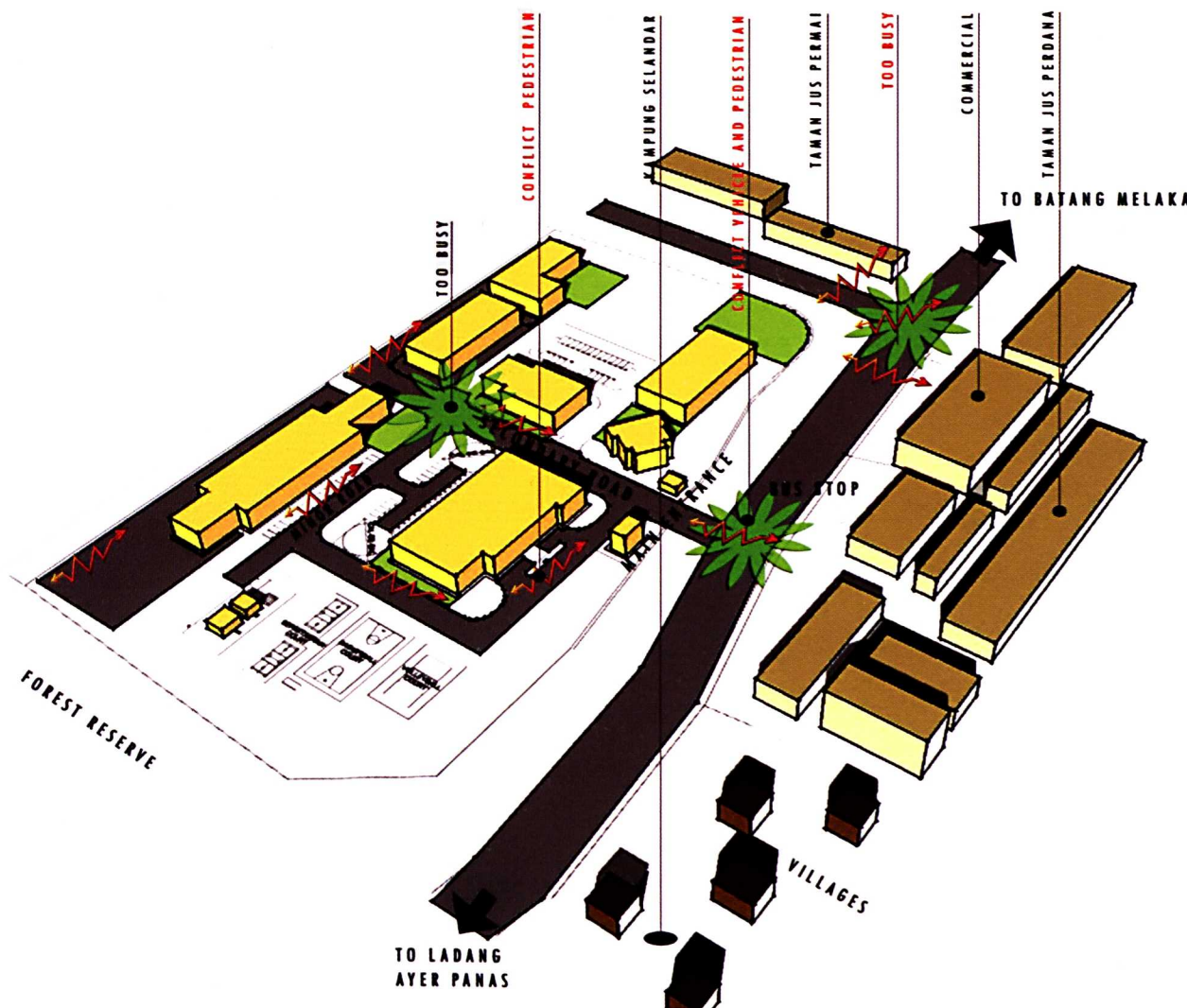
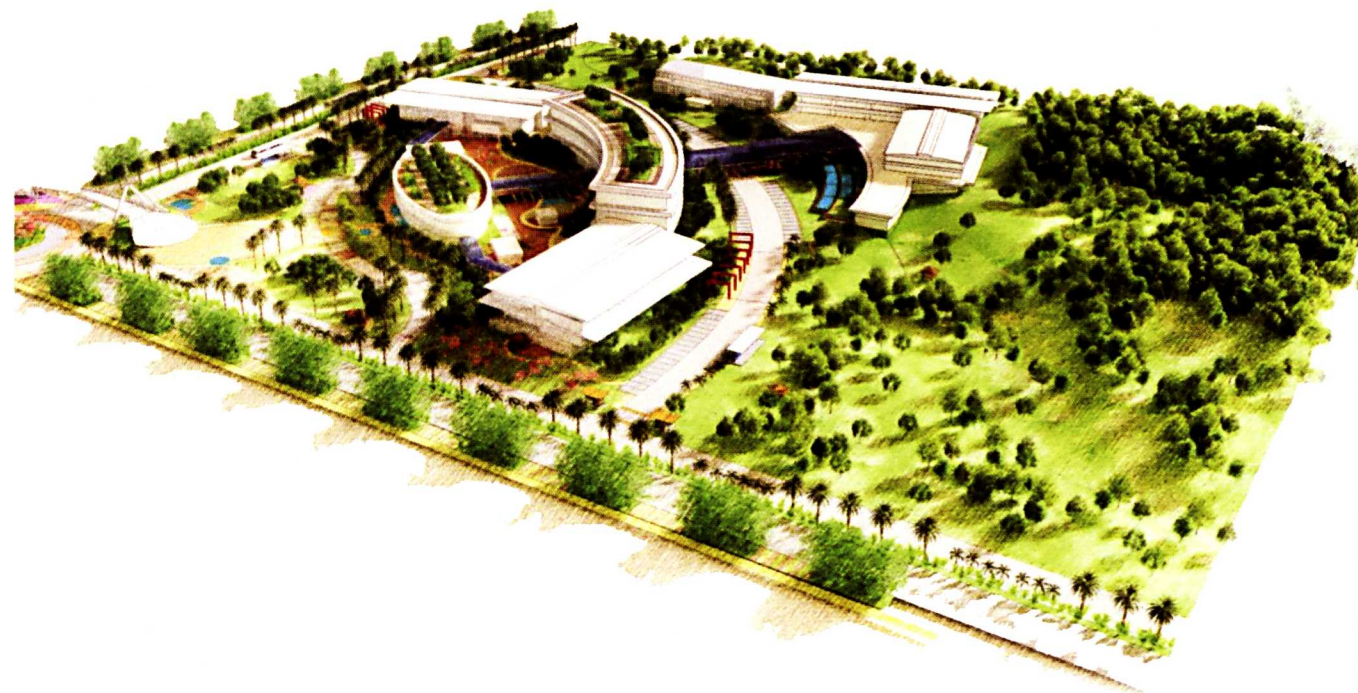
■ Muhamad Huzaimi Nor Rashid

Enriching Communal Integration

Norsidah Ujang

The proposed community college sited in Selandar, Melaka redefines the true meaning of a community college through spatial integration, identifiable accesses and effective connectivity. Reacted against the standard and ill-fitted to college planning and architectural design, it embraces the idea of sequential functional spaces providing continuity of spaces for community participation in the educational and social activities. Rooted in the sustainable concept of campus planning and design, the scheme exemplifies the manipulation of landscape elements, spaces and buildings using the concept of 'layering' of spaces from public to private with careful integration of soft and hardscape elements. These spaces support integrated activities for the existing college inhabitants and the surrounding community.

Based on the interpretation of spatial concept of Melaka traditional dwelling, emphasis is given to the spatial organisation of spaces generated by understanding their uses, activities and interrelationships. People from the surrounding communities are generously welcomed by an open public recreational space to encourage communal interaction. It is strongly directed to the main central building functioning as an administrative and information centre and library on the upper floor.



Rohaniah Mohd Nor

Buildings are organised to form a series of courtyards, gardens and water elements forming a sequence of spaces with a strong visual axis. The academic core is located in the inner layer while the residential units for staff form the innermost layer of the scheme. The meaning of integrated community college is reflected in the absence of hard edges of the site. Instead, physical and visual connectivities, integrated human interaction within the spaces and sense of harmony between interior and exterior spaces are made abundant.

The proposed model for community college synthesises a sustainable campus environment through shared activities and serves as a cultural centre, a long life learning centre and commercial centre. It forms a sense of place to which community and public can come to supplement its aesthetics as well as intellectual and cultural experiences. An integrated college environment could sustainably widen the presence of aesthetically pleasing public spaces and strengthen the campus as a community's design asset.





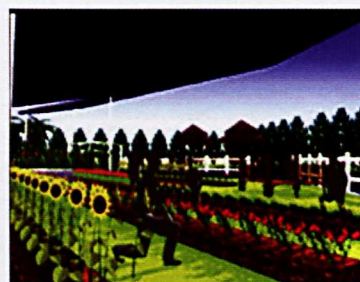
■ Azryt Aznan

Eudemonia

Osman Mohd Tahir, Mustafa Kamal Mohd. Shariff & Noor Azizi Mohd. Ali

Aging and aging gracefully has attracted the country's attention in recent years. This landscape design project is an attempt to change traditional attitudes towards aging by redesigning the outdoor spaces at a publicly funded home for the elderly in Jelapang, Ipoh in Perak.

The goal of the design is to create happiness and joy among the elderly residents. This is achieved through the integration of outdoor and indoor spaces that encourages the participation of outside communities with the elderly residents as well as fulfilling residents' basic needs.



The concept of "Eudemonia" was aptly chosen by Azryt to be the basis for the landscape design. Eudemonia describes the state of happiness, well-being, completeness and self sufficiency. It conjures images of satisfaction, pleasure, peace, respect and mutual understanding between residents, their next-of-kin as well as the concerned members of the community.

As the site is located in the midst of other residential neighbourhoods, Azryt takes great care to blend the proposed design, facilities and activities with its surrounding context. Azryt also introduces spaces and facilities that would attract outside communities to be involved with the residents and at the same time encourage residents to be more socially and physically active. A variety of appropriate facilities to cater for the needs and preferences of the elderly residents are sensitively combined with those that cater for visitors. Residents' comfort and safety are not compromised with the provision of proper structures such as a guardhouse and covered walkway.

The proposal appears to fulfil its goal of changing the traditional view of homes for the elderly Malaysians that are synonymous with being neglected, hopeless, sad and depressed. It becomes one that will bring satisfaction, pleasure, love, joy, and independence to the elderly residents. It is recommended that many more homes for the elderly in Malaysia are designed in such way which would foster respect and dignity for our elderly population.

